*Delegation from The Republic of Mali*

*United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,*

*Conference of the Parties: 22nd Session*

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*November 10, 2016*

**Position Paper**

Climate change is a prominent issue that poses a huge threat to member states around the world, certain endangered species, and the environment. The Republic of Mali has been an active member in combating the effects of climate change through various UN initiatives and intergovernmental programs. However, resources and the ability to respond are limited. More than 43% of the population is living in poverty and Mali’s Human Development Index is 168 out of 174. Mali experiences a hot, dry climate and as a result, frequent droughts occur. Because Mali is a landlocked state, an adequate water supply remains an uncertainty with the sporadic climate. Mali has been a signatory to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (1992) and the Kyoto Protocol (1999). The Republic of Mali hopes to generate cost efficient and timely solutions to the imminent challenge of climate change in COP 22.

**I. The Impact of Climate Change on Human Health**

The increasing variability of our climate greatly impacts human health, especially in developing countries like Mali. With the increase in heat waves, floods, and droughts, comes the increase of health effects such as malaria, diarrhoea, and malnutrition. However, recurring droughts and variability in rainfalls proves the biggest concern for the country of Mali. More than 80% of the population is dependent on agriculture and 50% of the country’s GDP comes from agriculture. This makes the country vulnerable to lack of food security, malnutrition and possible migration. Warmer temperatures will cause greater evapo-transpiration, which will lead to drier soil conditions in many areas.

Flooding is also a great risk to the country, as they destroy crops and property, increase erosion of fragile soils, and can lead to water-born diseases such as diarrhoea.

Without adaptation measures put in place, Malians would greatly suffer. However, the government is doing as much as possible to prepare for the adverse effects of climate change. Strategies such as diversification of land-use patterns, soil conservation techniques and a generation of off-farm income currently exist. In order to be successful, adaptation strategies must stem from ideas and needs of local communities. Since 2012, USAID has helped rural farming communities better adapt to unpredictable climate. USAID’s Mali Climate Change Adaption Project will build on 30-year program implemented by Mali’s National Meteorological Agency, which provides climate and weather information to rural farmers throughout Mali. This will help prepare places such as the Sorghum farming system in the Sahel, which is one of the most vulnerable farming systems to drought in the world. Hopefully, with these strategies in place, Mali will be at less risk to destruction of agriculture.

The Republic of Mali urges other developing countries to introduce climate regulations within their communities. Organizations such as NAPA (Mali’s National Adaptation Programme of Action), which was completed in 2007, prioritise adaption projects depending on the needs of different areas. Certain programs such as micro-dams for irrigation, and raising awareness about natural resource management are taking place; however, as previously stated, resources are limited. In order to reduce the impact of climate change on a world stage, it need to be addressed on a smaller scale, first.

**II. Climate Refugees**

Between 2008 and 2015 more than 203.4 million people were displaced by natural disasters. In developing countries, people are forced to leave their homes as an increasing number of people compete for a decreasing number of resources. An estimated one person every second has been displaced by a disaster, with an average of 22.5 million people displaced by climate or weather-related events since 2008.

In the Sahel region in Mali, 11 million people are at risk of hunger. Climate displacement expert Alice Thomas stated, “in particularly bad years, 80 or 90 percent of people will leave their villages altogether in some parts of the Sahel.” While this percentage is not referring to climate refugees, it is referring to internationally displaced persons due to the climate. A refugee is a person who crosses a political border to reach a safe haven, while an IDP is a person who relocates within their country. Mali has had an outbreak of IDP’s from Sahel. Frequent droughts and floods have reduced crop yields and wiped out savings, leaving many with no other option than to leave their land. Climate change has created more socio-economic problems than ever before.

In order to deal with this issue, Mali believes that climate refugees/IDP’s should be protected under the law. As well, each country should have a Natural Disaster Emergency Response Plan. Mali does not have a concrete NDERP that highlights the importance of protecting climate IDPs. Therefore, Mali seeks the aid of other member states to construct a NDERP and international recognition of the current problem at hand.

**III. Steps to Enforce the Paris Agreement and Further Reduce Green House Gas Emissions**

As of September 2016, Mali is one of the 62 member states that have ratified the Paris Agreement, an act that is crucial to the treaty’s success. These states account for 47.79% of greenhouse gas emissions. Actions for this treaty depend on countries to implement the agreement in their own policies, something that Mali has started doing through the aid of the US. The two-pronged approach to tackling climate change includes mitigation and adaptation, and although adaption strategies have been generated, mitigation is proving difficult.

Political awareness of the Malian government on the need to protect the environment is high, since the harmful droughts in the 1970s and 1980s. As a result, environmental concerns are well integrated into Mali’s second Poverty Reduction Strategy. In 1998, the Politique Nationale de Protection de l’Environement (PNPE) was approved and it remains the dominant legal instrument of environmental policy in Mali. Their central goal is to promote sustainable development by ensuring food security and development of national capacity for sustainable management of natural resources. However, the policy has not been even close to fully implemented because most of the Malian government’s efforts have been towards adaptation.

It’s important to recognize that developed countries are the most responsible for greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere, as outlined by the Kyoto Protocol. The Protocol places a heavier burden under developed nations. Mali has low levels of emissions (0.05 tonnes/capita) compared to the world average (4.22 tonnes/capita). 96% of Mali’s energy consumption is firewood and charcoal, causing forestation and associated with indoor fires. Mali’s great potential for solar and wind energy would reduce deforestation and health risks. For adaptation, efficient water management systems will be vital for adequate water supply. The Malian government also promotes the sharing of information between groups through forums to attract funding for various projects. This can be done on a larger scale, for example member states sharing their plans for mitigation and adaptation, and possibly receiving aid from larger states that contribute the most to emissions. As the former minster for employment in Mali, Dialla Mahamane Kattra said, “those who have contributed the least to the warming of the planet are often the ones who are suffering the most from the effects.”

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